

INITY IN JAINISM

BY

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Konnagar (Dt. Hugly)

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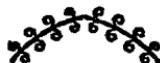
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PREFACE.

In attempting to state the Jaina theory of God, my object has been purely that of a dispassionate student of Comparative Theology. Nothing has been farther from my aim than to denounce the theory of God, held by any religious sect. My object has been to give a short description of the Jaina theory of God and to show in what respects it is similar to and in what respects it is different from the other theological doctrines. It is hoped that this short essay may tend to create some interest in scholars in the study of the Jaina philosophical thought.

KONNAGAR
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THE AUTHOR



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DIVINITY IN JAINISM.

What are we to understand by Divinity ?

That there is a Creator of this limitless universe full of planets and stars, that it is owing to his law inexorable that suns and moons light up in space, breeze blows in all the directions, streams of rain destroy the hardness of the soil, vegetables and animals grow and the world with its pleasures and pains continues in its perennial freshness,—ordinarily, people have applied the term God to such an undeterminable Architect of the universe. Not only the Hindus but the Christians, the Mahomedans and the Jews as well have regarded God as the *Creator* of the world.

The doctrine of a World-Creator is known as *Theism* in western philosophy. Paley, Janet, Flint, Martineau are some of the great up-holders of the theistic theory. They establish the doctrine of the world-Creator in the following way If one attends carefully to the hands,

spring and other parts of the machinery of a watch and see how they work in a perfectly orderly manner, one cannot but come to the conclusion that there is an *Intelligent Maker* of the watch. Just, turn your eyes to the infinite expanse of space and see how the heavenly bodies are moving in their orbits with the minutest precision ! No collision, no disorder ! Consider again, the relics of the pre-historic earth, still extant in caves and subterranean recesses stratum after stratum,—with definite order in them ! Through orderly stages, a hot incandescent mass is made the place of habitation of animals. Slow and orderly evolution,— Vegetable, Lower Animals and then Humanity ! Whose workmanship is indicated in this flow of continuous evolution ? What infinite intelligence again, is traceable in the co ordination of mutually varied organs and parts of an animal body ! The theistic thinkers point to such innumerable evidences of intelligence and conclude that there is an Intelligent Creator of the cosmos, that this Creator is God and that creation is an act of kindness on His part

In ancient India, essentially similar arguments were advanced for the proof of the existence of God. The philosophers of the Nyāya school were theists. The Vaiśeṣhika thinkers

agreed with them in this matter Sankara Miśra says,

“ In this way, from the fact of production, we can conclude God. We may argue The earth etc have a Creator, because they are products, like a pitcher.”

A thinker of the Jaina school explains the Nyāya view in the following manner,—

“ The earth, the mountain etc. which are under consideration have an Intelligent Architect, because they have a Cause, whatever has a Cause has an Intelligent Creator, as for instance, a building, they are such (*i.e.*, have a Cause); hence, they are so (*i.e.*, have an intelligent Creator) ”

The Nyāya thinkers hold that the mountain etc are ‘products’ because they have parts *i.e.*, they are constituted of atoms The atoms are unconscious, there must be some Intelligent Agent who has compounded the atoms and formed them into the mountain etc This Intelligent Agent is God and the Nyāya thinkers further maintain that God has made the world out of kindness.

Various objections have been raised against the theistic theory of the west Many

philosophers contend that there is no intelligence at the back of the universe. The order that is found in the heavenly bodies is only a special application of the law of matter and not any fiat of an Intelligent God. Geological evidences are no evidences of intelligence ; the subterranean strata reveal terrible operations of the inexorable material laws. The origination of life also is explained by unconscious matter , the parts and limbs of an animal bear no evidences of an Intelligent Architect,—they also are products of slow and gradual evolution. As a matter of fact, there are still many organs and limbs which are useless to the animals,—nay, positively harmful to them. Look,—how many animals are suffering every moment,—how many are meeting with untimely deaths. Consideration of these things leads many philosophers to repudiate the theistic doctrine of God. Their further contention is that if you admit a necessity in God for creating the universe, you make Him finite. As regards the doctrine of kindness in God, they say that the world, as it is, does not prove it. Will any intelligent man be tempted to read kindness in the world of creation where there are deaths, famines, natural calamities, due epidemics, oppressions, tyrannies and endless sufferings ?

In ancient India the Jaina philosophers too raised objections against the theistic theory of the Nyāya school. They asked ; why should we call the earth etc. effects or products ? Even the thinkers of the Nyāya school admit that so far as their substantial essence is concerned, they are eternal. It is true of course that as varying modes, the earth etc are non-eternal *i.e.*, have origin and decay , but this is no reason why we must look upon the earth etc as products of God The soul has varied states and modes ; but even the Nyāya philosophers do not call the soul an effect. Then again, if God is a Being who transcends His creations (the earth etc , the effects), how can He act upon the atoms ? Seedlings and young plants have a natural origin and growth ; nobody ever thinks of any Intelligence at work behind them Like the western anti-theists, the Jainas too charge the upholders of the theistic doctrine with Anthropomorphism. The Jaina thinker, Prabhāchandra says,—

“ The theists maintain that God as the Creator has knowledge, will to act and active effort ; that He need not be an embodied Being. But this is impossible. One who is a disembodied Being cannot have knowledge etc ,—as

for instance, an emancipated Soul (who although emancipated, is never a creator) ” *

* Prameya-Kamala-Martanda (1st Edition, Published by Tukaram Jeevaji Proprietor, N S Press, 23 Kolbhat Lane Bombay) P 77 following —

The original is —

“ Jnāna-chikirshā-prayatnādhāratā hi kartritā na
saśarīrataratā iti apyaśāngalam śarīrabhātādādhāra-
tvasyāpy a sambhabānāmuktūtmabat ”

In the above text, Prabhā-chandra takes the Nyāya position according to which one of the conditions of knowledge is having a body and shows that if the Creator be supposed to have knowledge, he must be admitted by the Nyāya thinker himself, to have a body

Prabhā-chandra's own theory, however, can be gathered from the above passage He does not admit that all knowledge must require a body It is only finite knowledge,—that requires a body God's creative knowledge is finite knowledge and God, if He be a Creator must necessarily have a physical body, thus the Nyāya theory is an absurd doctrine

'Knowledge etc' here means finite knowledge etc. which are found in a Creator To attribute creative knowledge to the Lord is to make Him finite, —well, this is urged against Theism by the western thinkers and the Indian thinkers as well Prabhā-chandra also means this The Siddha (though disembodied) has knowledge, but His knowledge is not the finite knowledge of a Creator, His knowledge is infinite

If God be looked upon as the Creator of the universe, He must be admitted to be an embodied being, for, without a body, there cannot be any creation of a gross thing like the world. The Nyāya philosophers may maintain that so far as the creation of the world is concerned, it is enough if God has intelligence, creative will and effort, He need not have a body. But the Jaina objection is, If there be no body, where would knowledge, will and effort be? If you regard God as a perfectly disembodied Being like an emancipated Soul, He cannot have the intelligence, the will etc. of a Creator; so that the creation of the world by Him becomes impossible. If God be supposed to be the Creator, He must be supposed to be an embodied Being and consequently, a finite one too. With regard to the doctrine that God has created the universe out of kindness, the author of *Pramēya-kamala-mārtanda* says like the occidental anti-theists,—

“ It is not proper for a kind Being to be an author of pain,—to create pains and furnish animals with bodies for feeling them.”

If God is kind why should creatures feel pain at all?

to absolve God from His responsibility for the pains which men suffer in the world, the western theists sometimes take up the position that it is men themselves who are responsible for their sufferings. God arranged for the uninterrupted enjoyment of happiness here. Man becomes extremely avaricious and ambitious, and for this, man must have disease, suffering and misery; God is in no way responsible for them. It cannot be said that this contention is absolutely well-grounded, for, not infrequently, people who are not culpably greedy or vicious, are found to suffer from various vicissitudes. The Jews of ancient times used to argue,—God supplied the first man with unparalleled pleasures; but man choosing to act contrary to His will was expelled from the Garden of Eden and has been suffering disease, misery and death as consequences of his disobedience since that time immemorial, generation to generation. But what sort of explanation is this? Is it Divine kindness that their descendants would go on suffering for the sins of Adam and Eve? More reasonable seems to be the explanation of human misery and pain, offered by the ancient thinkers of India. According to the Nāiyāyika and other philosophers, the pain of

a being is due to his own act. A man does some act in this life ; in the next life, he gets a suitable body (determined by *Adrishta* or the effect of his act) and experiences pleasure or pain as the consequence of his act. Owing to *Adrishta*, man feels pain,—the kindness of God notwithstanding. The substance of the *Nāiyāyika* argument on this point is as follows —Body is made up of primal Elements, it is *Adrishta* which determines the nature of the Body ; both the primal Elements and *Adrishta* are unconscious, hence, to create a body for a being in order that he may experience the fruits of his action, a conscious Architect is necessary who utilises the *Adrishta* and the Elements for the purpose. This Architect is God, according to the *Nyāya* thinkers.

With regard to the above argument of the *Nyāya* School, the *Jaina* philosophers point out that if it is impossible for God to check the sufferings of creatures in spite of his infinite kindness for them, if the body etc. which feel pain or pleasure are really determined by *Adrishta*, there is no use in admitting the existence of a God. It is enough to say that owing to its own acts, the Soul since the beginningless time is migrating in the *Samsāra*.

(series of existences), getting various bodies and experiencing the fruits of its own actions. Atoms are unconscious. how can a body be formed without the intervention of a conscious God?—Well, the Jaina answer to this difficulty is as follows.—*Karma* is *Pudgala* or material in nature, owing to *Rāga* or spirit of attachment and *Dvēsha* or spirit of repulsion, Karma-matter naturally comes or is drawn into the Soul and forms its bodily environment.

Accordingly, the Jaina philosophy does not admit the existence of any Creator of the world and it refuses to maintain that God is such a creator.

What, then, are we to understand by Divinity?

There is a class of thinkers in the west who know that if the Soul and the Creator be separated, God becomes finite and hence they do not admit the reality or separate existence of any being other than God. The philosophers are well known as the *Pantheists*. Principles of Pantheism are traceable in the systems of the ancient Greek thinker, Parmenides and the Eleatics. Pantheism passed through the currents of the Platonic and the Aristotelian thoughts and became explicit in

Neo-Platonism In the Middle Age, Averraes was a famous pantheist Spinoza, the prince of philosophers, was the father of the pantheism of modern Europe. The German philosophers like Hegel, Schopenhauer etc are, in a sense, pantheists All the things of the universe, Soul, Matter etc., are either manifestations or modifications of the only existent Being, God, —there is nothing but God,—this is the first principle of the pantheistic philosophy. All the varied phenomena are really and substantially one, all of them are existent in and through the existence of God, all of them are in-formed by the life of God,—God is and there is nothing else. To consider the world as a separate reality is a mistake.

From very ancient times, India has its *Advaita* philosophy which denies the reality and the multiplicity of the things of the universe and which proclaims,—

“*Brahman* is the only Reality,—the Universe, an Illusion.”

The doctrine of *Māya* is closely related to the doctrine of the non-dual *Brahman*. According to the *Advaita* philosophy, Brahman is the homogeneous and the only existent Being—it is existence itself Beside it, all

things *e.g.*, Soul, Matter etc. are unreal. Brahman alone *is*. We say, "I *am*, That *is*, You *are*" But all these are due to *Avidyā* or ignorance. Really, however, there is nothing to be referred to as 'I' or 'That' or 'You'. The only Being that *is*, is the Brahman,

"The One and the Second-less."

This eternal and ever-pure Brahman when seen through the veil of *Mīya* (*i.e.*, Cosmic Ignorance), appears as the God (*Isvara*) of the universe,

"Who permeates all the three worlds, supports them, is indestructible and is God (*Isvara*)"

This eternal, ever-pure and second-less Brahman again, when viewed through the veil of *Avidyā* (*i.e.*, Individual Ignorance), appears as many *individuals* having varied names and forms. Seen through *Mīya*, Brahman is God! Seen through *Avidyā*, that self-same, "one and the second-less" Being is many and varied Individuals! Individual is God,—Individual is Brahman

There are many philosophers who criticise the pantheistic position. Philosophy is an attempt to determine the true nature of the things and phenomena of the world, instead

of doing so, pantheism denies the world itself. This is no explanation of the world. Then again, no one feels tempted to hold the things and the phenomena of the world as utterly unreal. Is it not opposed to the very perception of ours, that there is no difference between things and things, that all things are identical in nature and that all of them are the manifestations of one Pure Being? If all the Individual Souls are but identical and if all of them are but modifications of one ultimate Essence, there would practically be no 'Freedom of the Will', and, if there is no freedom of the will, man is not responsible for his good or bad acts and his final Emancipation becomes a misnomer.

In ancient India, the Jaina philosophers raised objections against the Advaita doctrine and their criticism of the pantheistic position was on essentially the same line with that of the modern philosophers. They argued that if you look upon the world as utterly non-existent or illusory, you deprive yourself thereby of all reality. To all appearance at least, the world is a reality to us, what reason is there to hold it as non-existent? Rather, the perception that the world is a reality should lead us to the conclusion that it

is real. The multiplicity and the variety of phenomena are matters of direct perception, why should we reject this perception? If Brahman is a reality, why should the things of the universe which appear to be as much real as the Brahman, be unreal? Like the occidental critics of the pantheistic theory, the thinkers of the Jaina school point out that if the multiplicity of the Souls be denied, their Emancipation or, *Mukti* becomes impossible. If all the Souls are but identical, not only should all the Souls be happy at the happiness of one Soul and grieved, at its grief but all the Souls should attain Salvation at the Salvation of one Soul and Salvation of all the Souls should be impossible as long as there remains any one Soul, un-emancipated. The Jainas contend that if the Advaita philosophy be true, then Bondage, Salvation, Merit, Sin—all these are mere verbiage. For, if the Individual Soul is Brahman, who has the Bondage, who, again gets Salvation and who practises Good or Bad?

The philosophers of the Advaita school urge, however, that although there is no real difference between Soul and Soul, one Soul is different from another, *practically speaking*,—so that at the Salvation of one Soul, the rest

will not be emancipated and so on. The Individual Soul is *really* identical with the ever-pure and the ever-free Brahman, but from the *practical* (*Vyavahāra*) stand-point, we may say that the former is in Bondage and different from the latter, and hence, the Individual Soul which is in Bondage should observe the rules and practices of Morality, as laid down by the Scriptures in order to attain the status of Brahman. In this way, the Advaita pantheists admit the reality of Bondage and Emancipation from practical point of view and the utility of moral rules and practices. With regard to this position, the Jaina thinkers point out that the very fact of the admission by the Vēdāntins of the practical reality of the world is proof enough that the individual Souls are really infinite in number and variety, that they are in Bondage from the beginning-less time, and that Right Faith, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct are the way to their Emancipation. The multiplicity of Souls, their Bondage from the beginningless time and their capacity to attain Emancipation are admitted by the Advaita thinkers also; according to them, however, these are true or real only from the practical view-point. The Jaina philosophers contend that the admission of the reality of the

multiplicity of the Souls, of their Bondage and of their capacity to attain Salvation is enough and all that is reasonable and necessary. There is no reason, nor any necessity for postulating a "one and Second-less" Brahman.

It is thus that according to the Jāinas there is no Brahman, the only Reality, "one and the Second-less" and God is not Brahman.

What, then, are we to understand by Divinity?

The Christians of Europe in the Middle Age often understood by God, the *Perfect Being*, the Father of the universe. The argument of the Perfectionists is known as the Ontological Argument St Augustine asked How can Man,—finite, un-wise, deluded as he is,—conceive *Truth*? It is because there is at the back of the universe a Perfect realised Ideal and Standard of Truth,—a *Perfect Being*—that it is possible for Man to conceive Truth. This Perfect Being, according to St. Augustine, is God. Anselm argued that there are grades or Strata (so to say) of Reality. The Universals are higher and truer Realities than the Individuals. There are higher and higher grades among the Universals, again. Hence it is,

necessary to admit a *Perfect Being* who transcends all the imperfect Universals and Individuals. According to Anselm, this highest Universal, this Perfect Being,—the *Ens Realissimum*—is God. God, the Perfect Being, *is*; because if He is non-existent, He cannot be Perfect, the want of *being* or *existence* is a want in *perfection*. At the dawn of the Modern Age, philosopher Discartes also revived something like this theory of a Perfect Being. He points out that man has the idea of a Perfect Being. Whence comes this idea? Man is imperfect, he cannot produce in himself this idea of a Perfect Being. Accordingly, it is to be admitted that there is a real Perfect Being who has instilled that idea into the human mind. This Perfect Being is God. According to Discartes, God, the Perfect Being, *is*; He *exists*; for without existence, perfection is impossible. In modern times, Royce has propounded a theory, not dis-similar to the theory of a Perfect Being. Man is imperfect, finite and limited,—he is groping in dark ignorance. Professor Royce contends that this very fact justifies our belief in a great Being who is in every way Perfect, Infinite and Intelligent.

It may be said that the theory of a Perfect Being was not unknown in India of forgotten

ages. India was a veritable wonderland of philosophic free thought. It may be asserted with some amount of confidence that the ancient Indian thinkers developed the perfectionist theory as well. The author of the *Yoga* philosophy distinctly says.—

“There is such a Being who is absolutely untouched by Pain, Action, Effect of Action and Volition. He is God (*Isvara*.)

“In Him inheres the seed of absolute Omnipotence”

“He is not measured by time and is the Teacher of all the previous teachers”

This is the Indian theory of the Perfect Being. The Greatest of the great, the Highest of the high, the Wisest of the wise is God, the Perfect Being,—this is the doctrine of Patanjali Bhōja-rāja, the commentator says—

“The phenomena like greatness, smallness etc, are found to be of various grades. An atom is the last stage in smallness whereas space is the highest limit to greatness. In the same way, the attributes of the mind, e.g., intelligence etc, are found to be of varied degrees. Hence there must be some Being in whom these psychical attributes are seen in their utmost perfection. This Being is God”

The redoubtable philosopher, Kant criticised the ontological argument or the theory of the Perfect Being. He argued that from the fact of having an idea of the Perfect Being in the mind or from the fact of being able to infer a Perfect Being, the conclusion is not justifiable that a Perfect Being *really is*. You may have an idea of the Perfect Being in your mind, but what evidence is there to show that your idea is not a mere figment of the brain and that there really is a great Being, God, corresponding to that idea?

Probably, a similar line of argument was advanced in ancient India against the Yōga theory of God. In the commentary of Bhōja, we come across the following,—

“ It may be admitted that the theory of the Perfect Being is only an inference which establishes something utterly abstract; from it, no knowledge of the particular attributes of God is possible. The particular attributes of God e g , Omnipotence etc are to be known in and through the Scriptures ”

From the fact of the gradation of knowledge etc, God is inferred as the abode of infinite knowledge etc, but the idea of God which is thus arrived at, is only an abstract idea. This is somewhat similar to the criticism

of Kant. Bhōja-rāja tries to meet this objection by saying that the Scriptures are there to give you the plenary idea about God. Kant hinted at the same draw-back,—the ontological argument can not prove the existence of God.

Although the principles of the Yōga philosophy were not essentially different from the Sāṅkhya, Kapila did not accept Patanjali's doctrine of God. He says.—

“God is not proved.”

The Philosophers of the Jaina school also have refused to admit the one God of Patanjali.

What, then, are we to understand by Divinity?

To the drastic criticism of Kant, the answer of the Hegelian philosophers is that Reality is not to be supposed as contradicting what is manifest to Reason ‘Real is Rational’ and ‘Rational is Real.’ From this, it may be said that if the idea of the Perfect Being is present in our rational Soul, the real existence of the Perfect Being is to be admitted. St. Augustine also said that Untruth is but the modification or limitation of Truth. the existence of absolute Truth, God, is proved by the existence of Untruth. Human knowledge is

finite, this very fact proves the existence and reality of Omniscience.

The Jaina conception of God is somewhat similar to the above. Our Soul is finite in knowledge because of its being bound up with *Karma* since the beginningless time. The 'knowledge-obscuring' Karma obscures or limits its power of cognition. If there were no such Karma, the Soul would have been possessed of Infinite Knowledge or Omniscience. The great Beings who have successfully extricated themselves from the bonds of Karma, are necessarily all-knowing. Karma is opposed to the nature of the Soul; the knowledge of the human Soul is limited, because it is bound up with Karma. As soon as the bonds of Karma are removed, the soul becomes omniscient. Hence the facts of the bondage and of the limitation of human knowledge prove the reality and possibility of final Emancipation and Omniscience.

Souls are infinite in number. Every Soul is in bondage and finite in knowledge. Now, if, as shown above, from the facts of bondage and finiteness of human knowledge, the reality and the possibility of final Salvation and Omniscience follow,—the Jainas argue that

instead of admitting one, ever-free, omniscient God, we should hold that every Emancipated Soul is an Omniscient Being.

The Emancipated Soul is Omniscient. God is none other than an Omniscient Being, —this is the Jaina theory of God

The Mimānsā school of philosophers deny the possibility of Omniscience and of Omniscient Beings. They argue as follows.—

“ Neither Pratyaksha, nor Anumāna, nor Āgama, nor Upamāna nor Arthāpatti is competent to prove the possibility of Omniscience. *Pratyaksha* or direct perception grasps only what is near by. How can all the things, beginning-less, endless, past, future, present, distant, atomic etc, be grasped by Perception? Accordingly, Omniscience cannot mean Perceptual knowledge of all the things. Then again, no Omniscient Being is an object of Pratyaksha or our perception. Nor, can we establish an Omniscient Being by *Anumāna* or Inference. *Anumāna* depends on an invariable relationship subsisting between the Mark (Hētu) and the Proven (Siddhya). Here the Proven is ‘the Omniscient Being’. There is no Mark which has such an invariable relationship with this Proven, that ‘the Omniscient

Being' can be inferred. Hence it is impossible to establish 'the Omniscient Being' by Inference. *Āgama* or the Scripture also cannot prove 'the Omniscient Being.' If it be said that there is Scriptural saying in support of Omniscience the question is, Is such Scriptural saying eternal or non-eternal? If such saying be held to be eternal, we say it is not authoritative; for, only those portions of the Scripture which lay down rules,—'Perform the Agnīsh-tōma sacrifice' etc etc,—are to be relied on as authoritative. If on the other hand, the Scriptural saying in support of Omniscience be held to be non-eternal, we ask, who is the author of such a non-eternal Scriptural text? If you say that the Omniscient Being himself is the author, then you commit the fallacy of 'mutual dependence.' The Scripture is said to be authoritative because the Omniscient Being is its author, and the Omniscient Being is sought to be proved because he is mentioned in the Scripture,—this is the fallacy of 'mutual dependence.' If, on the contrary, you contend that some in-omniscient Being is the author of such a Scriptural text, then we say that such a saying is unreliable. Hence it is that *Āgama* cannot prove an Omniscient Being. *Uपामान* or Analogy also cannot establish Omniscience.

Upamāna is based on a cognition of similarity. Nobody has ever seen a Being who is similar to an Omniscient Being and hence Upamāna cannot prove Omniscience. The Omniscient Being is neither proved by *Arthāpatti*. The object of *Arthāpatti* is something, which being denied, another thing which has already been validly established becomes impossible. Now, no object or phenomena which is already known becomes impossible if the Omniscient Being is denied. Hence *Arthāpatti* is incompetent to establish the Omniscient Being. If it be urged that on the impossibility of Omniscience, Buddha, Manu etc., cannot be held to be reliable teachers of religion and morality, the answer is that it is the Vēdas that are the emporium of all knowledge. Buddha, of course, has left many teachings about rules of morality, but as he was not versed in the Vēdas, he is to be held as having taught through ignorance, his teachership does not prove his Omniscience. Manu also is a teacher, he, too, is not Omniscient. Sages like Manu etc., were the foremost among persons, versed in the Vēdas, their teachership does not prove their Omniscience, all that their teachership proves is that the Vēdas are the emporium of all knowledge and that as Manu etc., were

well versed in them, they were the competent persons to teach people the rules of religion and morality.

"If it be urged that proofs of the possibility of Omniscience may be wanting now but that in the past or the future people might or may be convinced about the existence of an Omniscient Being,—the reply of the Mīmānsakas is that it is impossible. The supposed people of the past or of the future must be persons with limitations in knowledge and sensuous perception like us, so that if Omniscience is impossible to us, how can it be possible to them? The Mīmānsakas further argue that an Omniscient Being cannot know all things. If you say that it is through Pratyaksha or direct perception that he knows all things, he must be held to be unaware of such minute things as Merit etc. There would be difficulty again, if he be supposed to be knowing things through Anumāna. If Anumāna could make any one Omniscient, we are Omniscient,—which we are really not. Then again, the knowledge obtained through Anumāna or Āgama is, after all, vague; what is the use of attributing such knowledge to the Omniscient Being? Further,—what is Omniscience? If Omniscience means knowledge of

all things and phenomena, the question is, How is such knowing possible? If you say that the Omniscient goes on knowing the things one after another, Omniscience becomes impossible, in the past, the present and the future, the things and phenomena that came or come or will come into existence, are infinite in number, so that if these are to be known one after another, their complete knowledge is surely impossible. If, on the contrary, it be maintained that all things and phenomena are simultaneously present in the consciousness of the Omniscient,—well, even such an Omniscience is impossible. For, phenomena like the Cold and the Warm etc., are mutually exclusive and contradictory, how can such contradictory things be present in one's consciousness at one and the same time? On the other hand, you cannot say that it is enough to know some of the important things; for, one cannot be Omniscient without knowing all the things of all the times.

“Hence the Mīmānsaka concludes that Omniscience is impossible.”

Against the above celebrated doctrine of the Mīmānsā school, the Jaina thinkers maintain that there are proofs in support of the

doctrine of Omniscience. The eye has the power of *seeing* things. At the deep darkness of a midnight, this power remains *latent*; but at the advent of dawn when the nightly darkness is removed by the beaming light of the smiling eastern sky, the obstacles which obscured the visualising power of the eye are removed and the eye is consequently once more enabled to see all things. The same thing happens in the case of the Soul. The Soul has the power of knowing all the things of the universe,—Omniscience is its very nature. But owing to the influence of the knowledge-obscuring *Karmas*, this power of Omniscience remains inactive in the Soul from the beginningless time. When through right penances etc., these Karma-obstacles are radically removed, what wonder is there that the soul would be in its true nature of Omniscience? Now, the question is, whether the Soul has really this nature or essence viz., Omniscience. That the Soul is capable of knowing all the things is apparent from the fact that it can form judgments of 'Pervasion' (*Vyāpti*) i.e., inductive truths of general application. Even the *Mimānsakas* would admit that the knowledge of Pervasion consists in a sort of knowledge of things of the past, the

present, the future and the distant etc. The Mīmānsakas further admit that in the light of Āgama, man can know all things of the past, the present etc ; hence the Pramāṇa, called the Āgama, which is admitted by the Mīmānsakas themselves, is itself the second evidence with regard to the fact of capability of the Soul to know all things. The Jainas contend that it is a mistake to suppose that Omniscience through *Pratyaksha* or direct perception is impossible. The Pratyaksha which *we* have depends on the co-operation of the Senses and the Mind, hence it can grasp only a small number of things and those, gross, consequently Omniscience is impossible in us. The Pratyaksha, on the contrary, which the Sages have, does not depend on the Senses and the Mind, hence many a super-sensuous and minute things are seen by them. There is nothing to disbelieve that all things would be manifest in the Pratyaksha or perception of that great Being, Arhat who has destroyed all the obstacles viz, the *Karmas*. In the Rāmāyanā and other Purāṇas, it is stated that Vāinatēya used to see all the things within the range of many hundreds of yōjanas, it is a matter of ordinary observation that vultures etc, can see things at a greater distance. Our Pratyaksha may be limited but

this is no reason why Pratyaksha in all cases should be unable to grasp many and varied things. In some, as soon as the obstacles to Pratyaksha are removed, all things will be manifest to Pratyaksha. The Jaina philosophers maintain that Āgama too proves the existence of Omniscient Beings. There cannot arise any fallacy called the "*Mutual Dependence*" or "*Infinite Regression*." One Omniscient Being makes the Scripture; this Scripture proves another Omniscient Being who comes after Him. Like the Seed and the Shoot, the Omniscient Being and the Scripture are following one another. The Scripture, the Āgama is authoritative because it is made by an Omniscient Being. Omniscience again is real and possible, because the Scripture says so. Then again, the knowledge which we derive from Anumāna or Āgama is vague, because our Soul is polluted by the dirt of *Karma*. But why should the knowledge,—Omniscience—of a Being who is absolutely free from the dirt of *Karma* be vague? The Omniscient Arhat knows all things *simultaneously* as all His obstacles are absolutely removed; He is under no necessity of knowing the things *one after another*. Further, there is no reason why mutually opposed things may not be

grasped in *knowledge*. The knowledge of all things is possible in the Omniscient at all times. The Omniscient Arhat is free from *Moha*,—he has no liking for any thing. He is completely *Vitriāga*,—devoid of the feeling of affection or attachment ; hence, there is no possibility of His being subjected to attachment and repulsion when He knows the things

According to the philosophers of the Jaina school, our in-omniscience is nothing but a limitation of Omniscience. The very fact that we are in-omniscient proves that there are some obstacles to our Omniscience and that we would be Omniscient as soon as these are removed. Hence In-omniscience may be said to be impossible without the reality of Omniscience. The Mimānsā thinkers contend that the Āgama is not-man-made *i.e.*, self-existent (*Apaurushēya*) and that an Omniscient Being cannot be its author because Speech is impossible in him. To this objection, the Jaina reply is that Speech and Omniscience do not contradict each other so that an Omniscient Being can be a Speaker and the author of the Āgama. The Āgama is not self-existent ; it is made by the Omniscient Being. The Jaina philosophers point out that the Āgama becomes unreliable if the Omniscient be not said to be

its author. If the Omniscient Being is not the author of the Āgama, there cannot be any goodness or truth in it. The Jainas repudiate the Āgama which is admitted by the Mīmānsaka, still they would quote from the Vēdas of the Mīmānsakas and show that the possibility and the existence of the Omniscient are admitted by the Vēdas also,—

“ He has eyes on all directions, mouths on all directions, legs on all directions and arms on all directions He knows the universe. No body knows him He is said to be the First and the Great Being, the Hiranya-garbha, the Omniscient—”

Hence the possibility of the Omniscient must be admitted. The Jainas call the Omniscient Soul, God (Īsvara)

The emancipated Soul is God,—this is the Jaina view; hence according to it God is not one. From the time beginningless,—numerous Souls have been emancipated,—all of them are Omniscient and are Gods, according to the Jainas All these emancipated Beings have some attributes e.g., Omniscience etc , in common. If we confine our attention to these common attributes, we may say that Jainism is Monotheistic, in some sense.

The bondage of the Soul is due to Karma.

Freed from Karma,—the Soul is Emancipated, Omniscient and Divine. Karma, however, is of two sorts, according to the Jaina thinkers.—*Ghātiyā* or *Aghātiyā*. The former injures the natural attributes of the Soul, and is of four kinds,—knowledge-obscuring (*Jnānāvaraṇiya*), sensation-obscuring (*Darśanāvaraṇiya*), Deluding (*Mōhanīya*) and Obstructive (*Antarāya*). The first obscures the pure cognitive power of the Soul; the second stifles the power of sensation, the third does away with the purity, and right faith of the Soul, and the fourth obstructs its natural powers of energising and enjoying. The *Aghātiya* karma, again, is of four modes, viz.—Age (*Āyus*), Name (*Nāma*), Lineage (*Gōtra*) and Feeling (*Vēdanīya*). The first determines the time for which the Soul is to exist in the world; the second clothes the Soul with various bodies and limbs in accordance with its acts and inclinations, the third determines the birth of the Soul in a high or low family, and the fourth destroys the equanimity of the Soul and gives him pleasure or pain. The thinkers of the Jaina school maintain that when the Soul advances in the way to Salvation and through penances etc. succeeds in eradicating all the four modes of the *Ghāti-Karma*, he attains Omniscience.

Omniscience is otherwise called *Kēvala-jñāna*, pure knowledge. One who has this knowledge is *Jivanmukta* (i.e., emancipated-while-in-body). The Omniscient *Jivanmukta* are of two classes. Under the first class come those who are *Sāmānya-kēvalins* i.e., Ordinary Omniscient Beings. The *Tirthankaras* or the teachers form the second class. The *Jivanmukta* is a Being who is Omniscient, although he is embodied still. The *Sāmānya-kēvalins* effect their own salvation only. But the *Tirthankaras* on the contrary, are not satisfied with attaining their own emancipation but they teach the afflicted people of the world the way to their deliverance from the endless sufferings. The *Tirthankaras* are so called because their teachings form the *Tirtha* or bridges in the ocean of the world.

The religious books of the Jainas are loud in their praises of the *Tirthankara*'s qualities. He is the teacher of the true religion. The *Arhat* is worshipped as the *Tirthankara* also because He addresses the *Tirtha* or the assembly of the four great groups of people,—the Monks, the Nuns, the House-holders and the Ladies.

“ One who is *Arhat* has destroyed the four kinds of the *Ghāti-karma*. He is possessed of

the four Infinities viz., of Perception, of knowledge, of Happiness and of Power. He is embodied in a glorious body, he is pure."—50, *Davva-Sangaha*. Although embodied, Arhat is free from the attachment to His body, and may accordingly be called *dis-embodied* as well. At the same time, it is said that the brilliance of the Arhat's body overwhelms thousands of suns. Brahma-dēva says,—

"According to *Nischaya Naya*, Arhat is dis-embodied. According to the *Vyavahāra-Naya*, however, He is supposed to have a body which is pure, free from the seven physiological elements, brilliant like the combination of a thousand suns "

Arhat is supremely pure. He is free from the eighteen faults,—hunger, thirst, fear, envy, attachment, delusion, thought, old age, disease, death, sorrow, sweating, pride, languor, surprise, birth, sleep and grief. Arhat is free from all worldly desires, utterly pure and absolutely spotless.

What the Divine Incarnations like Rāma-chandra etc. are to the followers of the Brāhmaṇya-faith, what the Buddha is to the Buddhists, is the Tīrthāṅkara to the Jainas. To make light the heavy load of world's sins, to purify the gloomy hearts with the light of

true faith, the Tirthankaras incarnate themselves in every Kalpa or cosmic Cycle. As soon as the Tirthankara touches His mother's womb, many glorious dreams are experienced by her ! At the five auspicious moments viz., when the Tirthankara comes into the womb of His mother, when He is born, when He leaves the house, when He attains the pure knowledge and when He enters into the Nirvāna or the blessed state, the great deities like Indra etc. worship that great Soul with great pomp, care and veneration ! Because He gets these five worshippings ('Arhā'), called the five 'Mahā-kalyānas, the Tirthankara is called the Arhat. He is the lord of the four *Atisāyas*,—the four Infinities of Perception, Knowledge, Happiness and Power. The following four *Atisāyas* also are possessed by the Arhat—1. *Apāyāpāgama*,—He is not touched by grief etc. 2. *Jnāna*—all the phenomena of the world are known to Him. 3. *Puja*—all the beings of the world worship Him. 4. *Vachana*—His teachings are pleasant, useful and intelligible to all.

The Tirthankara is the visible Lord,—the God who could be actually perceived. The sacred books of the Jainas describe His glorious appearance, qualities and lordliness. From the moment of His birth, the Tirthankara is

possessed of the three kinds of knowledge viz., the sensuous, the scriptural and the clairvoyant, (1) From the moment of His birth, His body is perfectly pure, no stain, no sweating can ever be found in it, (2) no excretions from His organs, (3) the flesh and blood of His body are purely white; (4) His words are always pleasing and beneficial to all the living beings, (5) His beauty is indescribable and incomparable; (6) His body gives out sweet and fragrant smell, (7) 1008 marks of supreme beauty are seen on His body, (8) He possesses great strength; (9) His body is such that it cannot be cut; (10) His constitution is symmetrically built. When He attains omniscient knowledge, (11) His body becomes shadowless; (12) He takes food no more, (13) He is free from troubles, (14) His eyelids do not wink, (15) He is free from injury, (16) Wherever the Tirthankara goes, famine disappears, (17) People understand all sciences and arts by meditating on Him; (18) His nails and hairs do not grow any further. (19) The Lord moves in the air, (20) He appears to face all the four directions simultaneously. (21) His speech is such that it is understood by all the creatures, (22) The fruits, flowers etc., of all the seasons are found in the region where the Lord stays;

(23) All creatures are friendly with one another ; (24) Everywhere in the country, peace, prosperity and amity prevail at the advent of the Tirthankara. All kinds of epidemics and diseases disappear. The lame walk ; the deaf hear, the dumb speak ; the blind see, and the maimed are made whole. (25) The place where He preaches, called the *Samavasarana*, is very pure and clean ; (26) Cool, fragrant, light zephyr blows around Him ; (27) The god *Vayu-kumara* removes all dust from the Samavasarana ; (28) The god *Meghakumara* sprinkles cool and sweet-smelling water, (29) The deities and men cry out shouts of *Jai ! Jai !!* Victory ! Victory !! ; (30) All kinds of grain grow in plenty, (31) Akasa and the directions are pure ; (32) eight kinds of auspicious things attend the procession ; i.e., umbrella, chowrie, banner, svastika, mirror, kalasa, vardhamanaka, bhadrasana ; (33) Golden lotuses blow at every foot-step of the Arhat ; (34) The *Dharma-Chakra* precedes the sacred procession.

The Jainas bow down to five great Beings, the first of whom is God, the Tirthankara about whom they utter,—

“Salutation to the Arahanta !”

The Soul obtains Embodied Emancipation

at the destruction of the Ghāti-karmas. Although emancipated-in-body and omniscient, both the ordinary Kēvalin and the Tīrthankara have a corporeal frame. The Being who is emancipated-in body has no attachment to his body,—his body is brilliant like a thousand suns combined and is absolutely stainless ; still, there is the body which clings to the emancipated Being. The day on which this Being destroys the Aghātiya Karmas, this corporeal frame goes off. This dis-embodied state of the Soul is the inexpressible state of its final Emancipation. At this time, the span of the worldly life of the Soul ends, the body also which changes every moment, goes off too ; the distinction of a low or a high family does no longer exist ; at the extinction of the Aghātiya Karmas, the Soul is completely free on that high day. This is Disembodied Salvation (*Vidēha Mōksha*). This disembodied emancipation is but natural to the Soul and in it lies its highest development and perfection. When the Aghātiya Karmas are destroyed both the Sāmānya-Kēvalin and the Tīrthankara attain the disembodied emancipation. In the world, the Tīrthankara is more venerable than the ordinary Kēvalin. But when the disembodied Salvation is attained, there remains no

difference between them. Both of them are equal in that state ; both of them are emancipated. The Omniscient Beings who have obtained the disembodied salvation are called the 'Siddhas' by the Jainas :—

" The Siddha has no body which is constituted of the eight modes of Karma. He sees and knows the *Lōka* (the universe) and the *Alōka* (the Infinite void space beyond). He is really completely disembodied ; but (for practical purposes) He is supposed to have a body (slightly less than His last corporeal frame) He stays at the summit of the *Lōkākāśa*." 51, *Davva-Sangaha*.

The Siddha never returns to the *Samsāra*, the world of transmigrations. He is not benefited by any one. He does not do anything ; He is neither a cause nor an effect. The Infinities of Perception, Knowledge, Power and Happiness inhere in Him. Far, very far down,—is revolving the Round of *Samsāra*. The Siddha lives in and through His essence in the peaceful 'Siddha-Śilū,' the abode of the Siddhas, at the very peak of this universe. The beginningless pains of the world have gone away from Him for eternity to come ! Lower, lower still down from the Siddha is the *Lōkākāśa*, the universe, the prison-house of

Karma,—above Him, is the eternally silent, indeterminable, eternally unmoved, infinite *Alōka* (the void Space) !

The Soul which is Siddha is possessed of (1) the Right Faith (*Samyaktva*) ; (2) He has Infinite Knowledge (*Jnāna*) ; neither in the Lōka nor in the Alōka, there is anything which is beyond the range of His ken ; (3) He is possessed of Infinite Perception (*Darśana*) ; (4) Infinite Power (*Virya*) is another attribute of the Siddha , (5) the Siddha is infinitely minute (*Sūkshma*) ; He cannot be perceived by the senses ; (6) the Siddhas have Inter-penetrability (*Avāgāha*) ; they are not material in nature. Hence, just as one mass of light can penetrate into another, one Siddha can co-exist with another Siddha in the same place (7) The Siddha is neither heavy nor light (*Agurulaghu*) , He is calm and collected in His own essential nature, existing in the Siddha-śilā (8) The eighth attribute of a Siddha is Equanimity (*Avyāvādha*) ; worldly pains or pleasures cannot touch Him , the Siddha is in an endless, un-disturbed, un-changed, limitless state of joy.

The philosopher of the Vēdic school does not contemplate the Brahman in the hope of getting some worldly benefits thereby , nor

does a Buddhist worship the Buddha for securing any worldly enjoyments. In the same way, the Jaina religious men also do not pray to God in the hope of satisfying the greedy lusts of the world. For worldly things, the people of the Vēdic school worshipped many Gods and Goddesses, the Buddhists also had their Gods and Goddesses for the purpose, and the Jainas also believe in many such deities, great and small. Just as the contemplations of the Brahman and of the Buddha are meant for the self-culture and self-development of the Vēdic and the Buddhist devotees, the worship of God is meant for the self-improvement of the Jainas in the same manner. The Tīrthankara does not give any worldly good, He is now in the Siddha-silā; the Siddhas have no connection with the worldly affairs, accordingly, they are incapable of actively giving, bestowing or doing anything. But the reason why the Jainas bow down to the Siddhas, is that such veneration does good to one's own Soul. The Siddhas are the luminous Ideals before us. The contemplation of these Ideals leads the Soul in bondage in the way to its liberation. This is the secret of the Jaina prayer. It is for this that the Jainas reverently utter,—

“ Salutation to the Siddha ! ”

The Jaina theory of God is indicated above. There is nothing repulsive or repugnant in it. We do not propose to discuss here whether the Jaina theory is correct or not. What we mean to say is that none can deny that there is in it much of deep philosophical speculation and above all, a sincere attempt to discover the truth. The Jaina doctrine is not atheistic, at any rate, it does not openly deny the possibility of God like the Mīmānsā theory. As shown above, the Jaina theory is at variance with the theories of other schools of Indian philosophy. Nevertheless, it is also to be admitted that the Jaina theory of Divinity has some points of similarity with the other theories. *The Soul is God (Isvara), is Omniscient*,—this is clearly admitted by the thinkers of the Sāṅkhya school also,—

“ This is nothing but praising the Liberated Soul or praying to the Siddha.”—93, Chapter on *Vishaya Sāṅkhya-sūtram*.

The doctrine of the Sankhya philosophers is that the God, referred to, in such Vēdic texts as “ He is all-knowing, all-doing ” etc. etc. means nothing but the Liberated Soul. That God is Omniscient, that His contemplation leads to one’s self-development and that

God is the Teacher,—all this is admitted by the thinkers of the Yōga school. The Liberated Soul is God, is Brahman,—this is the Vēdānta position. The Nāiyāyikas too admit that God is Omniscient. A sort of Omnicience is believed in by the Buddhistic thinkers as well.

A little reflection of the Jaina theory of God would show that the Jaina philosophy is one of the ancient systems in India. It is assuredly not post-Buddhistic in origin ; there is difficulty in considering it as contemporaneous with Buddha. It seems to us that the Jaina philosophy preached a new doctrine of God in a new way in that misty, forgotten age in which various other theories of Divinity were being propounded in ancient India !



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